

II. Ministers/Health Secretaries from different States raised a few other issues and these are as follows :—

(a) *Additional Vehicles* : A number of States raised the point that all new PHCs should be given vehicles. In respect of States like Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan with a difficult terrain and geographical conditions, a differential approach needs to be adopted in matter of allotment of vehicles.

Likewise there was a need for upward revision of POL rates sanctioned for the vehicles.

(b) *Increase in cost of drugs and dressings* : In view of the steep rise in the cost of drugs and dressings it was decided that the amount provided for each case of sterilisation needs an upward revision from Rs. 25/- to Rs. 35/-.

III Some of the Health Ministers raised specific problems faced by them and the Chairman assured them that these will be considered sympathetically and appropriate action taken in due course.

#### Special Programme for Low Cost Houses

\*74. SHRI BHADRESHWAR TANTI :  
SHRI BIMALKANTI GHOSH :

Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether any special programmes have been drawn up for the construction of low cost houses in the country during the next three years ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ; and

(c) the funds allotted for the same ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH) : (a) to (c) A statement is given below.

#### Statement

While no special programmes have been drawn up for the construction of low cost houses in the country during the next 3 years, the government's policy is to encourage the construction of low cost houses, particularly for the Economically Weaker

Sections and Low Income Groups, whose affordability is limited. In this connection, the following main steps have been and are being taken.

(i) The National Housing Bank has been set up with an initial paid up capital of Rs. 100 crores to provide additional funds for the promotion of, inter alia, low cost housing, particularly for weaker sections. It is also proposed to extent the role of Land Development Banks to cover the field of housing finance for farmers.

(ii) The Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) has been ear-marking 55% of its annual loan sanctions for the construction of dwelling units for the Economically Weaker Sections and Low Income Groups, for which viable low cost ceiling limits have been prescribed.

(iii) HUDCO has also been encouraging the use of locally available low cost materials and technology in the construction of houses.

(iv) It has been decided to set up a national net work of Nirman/Nirmithi Kendras which will provide easy access to low cost housing materials and techniques.

(v) To reduce the cost of house building materials, to encourage the use of unconventional materials which would be cheap and functional and to help divert demand from wood to metals in housing construction, excise duty on cement, on doors, windows and their frames etc made of aluminium and steel, on structural intermediates and components of pre-fabricated buildings and on fly ash bricks has been reduced. Lympo, a cement substitute, has been exempted from excise duty altogether.

(vi) The Department of Rural Development is implementing the Indira Awas Yojana under which low cost houses are being constructed and provided free to the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and freed bonded labourers in rural areas.